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b) combining said biological sample with said [nucleotide] oligonucleotide or polynucleotide under conditions such that a hybridization complex is formed between [said nucleic acid and said nucleotide] the nucleic acid in said biological sample and oligonucleotide or polynucleotide; and

c) detecting said hybridization complex.

9. (Amended) The method of Claim 8, wherein, said nucleic acid [corresponding to the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:100] encoding a human telomerase polypeptide is a ribonucleic acid.

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11. (Amended) The method of Claim 8, wherein, said nucleic acid [corresponding to the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:100] encoding a human telomerase polypeptide is a deoxyribonucleic acid.

12. (Amended) The method of Claim 11, wherein said detecting of said hybridization complex comprises conditions that permit the detection of [alterations in the nucleotide of] a deletion, insertion, or point mutation in the sequence of the nucleic acid encoding a human telomerase polypeptide when compared to SEQ ID NO:100 [in said biological sample].

Please add the following new claims:

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21. A method of detecting the presence of an nucleic acid that encodes a telomerase protein in a sample comprising:

a) contacting the sample with a oligonucleotide or polynucleotide that specifically hybridizes to said nucleic acid, and detecting the hybridization complex; or,  
b) amplifying said nucleic acid and detecting the amplification product;  
wherein the nucleic acid hybridizes under stringent conditions to a polynucleotide identical or complementary to SEQ ID NO:100.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the sample is from a human tissue sample.